

REMARKS

Summary

Claims 1-19 were pending. Claims 1, 3, 6 and 13 have been rewritten, Claims 20 and 21 have been added and Claims 2, 9-10 and 19 cancelled. No new matter was added as a result of this amendment.

Rejection of Claims

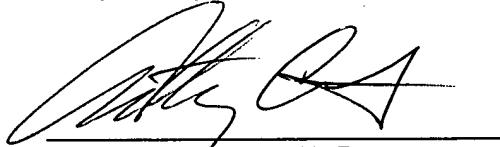
Claims 1, 4, 6-9, and 13-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ohmae (U.S. Patent 5,644,127). Claims 2-3, 5, 10-12, and 19 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but the Examiner indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in an independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have rewritten 1, 6 and 13 to incorporate the elements of Claims 2, 9 and 10, and 19, respectively. Applicants have also added Claim 20, corresponding to a combination of Claims 1 and 5, and Claim 21, corresponding to a combination of Claims 6-8 and 11-12. Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and arguments above, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seek an early allowance thereof. If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application in the next Office Action and believes that a telephone interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, she is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony P. Curtis', is written over a horizontal line.

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